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CLIENT HANDOUT



✳ AFTER WORK

Building Your Transition Home Ritual

A short routine that tells your body the workday is over, so you walk in the door as yourself.

Most people go straight from work mode into home mode with nothing in between. The day comes in the door with them. Leaving the building doesn't tell your body the day is done. It stays braced and keeps running on what happened.

This matters even more after long shifts, hard calls, or work that keeps you on alert all day. The people at home feel it. If you live alone, it keeps you up instead.

A transition ritual is a short routine you do the same way at the end of every workday. Done often enough, it becomes a signal. Your body learns that this is where work stops.

It doesn't need to take long. Five or ten minutes is enough for most people. Pick a few ideas from page 2, build your ritual on page 3, and give it two weeks before you change it.

✳ QUICK REFERENCE

What a good transition does

STEP	IN PLAIN WORDS	WHAT IT CAN LOOK LIKE
REFLECT	Look back, then set it down.	Name what went well. Name what was hard, and let it go for today.
REST	Give your body a break.	A few quiet minutes. Breathe, walk, or put on music you like.
RESET	Decide how you want to walk in.	Think about who or what is waiting, and how you want to show up.

Same way, every time.

Repetition is what turns a routine into a signal. Keep the order the same.

Short beats perfect.

Three steps you'll actually do beat ten you won't. Start small.

Expect off days.

A late night or a skipped day doesn't undo it. Pick it back up the next day.

✳ PART ONE

Ideas to choose from

Check the ones that fit your day. Skip what doesn't. Many of these came from first responders, nurses and other shift workers.

STEP 1 · AT WORK

Before you finish

- [ ] Name one hard thing from today. Then let it go.
- [ ] Name three things that went well.
- [ ] Jot down what's still unfinished so it's out of your head. Then close the notebook.
- [ ] Change out of work clothes or uniform before you leave.
- [ ] Wash your hands slowly, like you're rinsing off the day.
- [ ] Turn off work notifications.

STEP 2 · THE COMMUTE

On the way home

- [ ] Play the same song or playlist every day.
- [ ] Drive a few minutes with the radio off.
- [ ] Take the long way home.
- [ ] Pick a landmark. Once you pass it, work stays behind.
- [ ] Vent for five minutes on a call. Then drop it.
- [ ] Eat a snack so you don't walk in starving.

STEP 3 · THE THRESHOLD

At the door

- [ ] Sit in the car for five minutes and breathe.
- [ ] Walk around the block before you go in.
- [ ] Touch a tree, a plant or the doorframe. Leave the day there.
- [ ] Put your keys, bag and gear in the same spot every time.
- [ ] Take three slow breaths. Decide how you want to walk in.
- [ ] Say a short phrase as you step in, like "I'm home."

STEP 4 · INSIDE

The first 30 minutes

- [ ] Shower and wash off the day.
- [ ] Change into clothes you only wear at home.
- [ ] Have tea or coffee in the same chair.
- [ ] Move. A walk, a stretch, a workout.
- [ ] Do something with your hands. Cooking, gardening, a project.
- [ ] Put the phone down and stay off the news for a while.

STEP 5 · RECONNECTING

With the people at home

- [ ] Say "I need 10 minutes." Then come back.
- [ ] Tell them how long you need, and when you'll reconnect.
- [ ] Ask each other: what do you want me to know about today? What do you need tonight?
- [ ] After a hard day, say that much. Skip the play-by-play.
- [ ] Give the kids a few minutes of your full attention first.
- [ ] Live alone? Text or call one person.

WORKING FROM HOME

You still need the gap

Make a fake commute. Close the laptop and put it out of sight. Change your clothes. Then walk around the block for ten minutes. Coming back in is your door.

WORKING NIGHTS

Keep it, just shorter

Same steps, fewer of them. Sunglasses on the drive home, a quick shower, then a dark, cool room.

✳ PART TWO

Build yours

Pick one or two from each step. Write them the way you'd say them. Aim for something that fits in about ten minutes.

My Transition Home Ritual

BEFORE I FINISH WORK

ON THE WAY HOME

AT THE DOOR

MY FIRST 30 MINUTES

WITH THE PEOPLE AT HOME, OR ON MY OWN

AFTER A REALLY HARD DAY, I'LL ADD

After two weeks

WHAT'S HELPING

WHAT I'LL CHANGE

BRING IT TO SESSION

If work keeps following you home for weeks, bring it up. The same goes if a drink, hours of scrolling or shutting down has become how you get through the evening. We can work on it together.

If you're in crisis, call or text **988** (Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, available 24/7) or call **911**.

✳ Educational material, not a substitute for clinical care. Informed by Adam Fraser's research on the third space (reflect, rest, reset), the NHS Going Home Checklist, and ideas shared by first responders, nurses and other shift workers.